

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 MANAGU 04077 301357Z

65

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 /064 W

----- 039584

R 272242Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0988

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOEE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

DIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MANAGUA 4077

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: MARR, OAS, ES, GT, HO, CS, PN, NU

SUBJECT: CONDECA: WRAP UP

REF: MANAGUA 3930

SUMMARY: THE CENTRAL AMERICAN DEFENSE COUNCIL, CONDECA, MEETING IN MANAGUA DURING WEEK OF AUGUST 16 WAS SIGNIFICANT NOT ONLY FOR AGREEMENT TO PROCEED WITH "AGUILA" MILITARY EXERCISE (REFTTEL) BUT FOR CLIMATE OF COOPERATION AMONG CENTRAL AMERICAN MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES. POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WHICH MIGHT HAVE RESULTED FROM IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING EL SALVADOR-HONDURAS BORDER TENSION AND POLITICAL DISPARITY AMONG MEMBERS WERE APPARENTLY SHELVED, AT LEAST OUTWARDLY. PRESIDENT SOMOZA STRESSED NEED FOR CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO STAND TOGETHER TO CONFRONT COMMUNIST THREAT. END SUMMARY

1. INITIAL DOUBTS ABOUT THE POTENTIAL SUCCESS OF THE CONDECA MEETING CENTERED ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

--THE OAS REFEREE SEPARATING THE TWO PUGILISTS--EL SALVADOR AND
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MANAGU 04077 301357Z

HONDURAS--WOULD NOT BE PRESENT IN CONDECA. COULD THEY WORK

COOPERATIVELY?

--WOULD DIFFERENT POLITICAL PERCEPTIONS AMONG COUNTRIES SUCH AS GUATEMALA OR NICARAGUA AND PANAMA DISRUPT COOPERATIVE ACTION?

--WOULD A NONMILITARIZED COSTA RICA BE ABLE TO COOPERATE WITH THE SEVERAL NEIGHBORING MILITARY GOVERNMENTS?

2. THE AGENDA ISSUES WHICH WERE MOST LIKELY TO HAVE SURFACED LATENT DISAGREEMENT INCLUDED THE "AGUILA" EXERCISE AND CHAIRMANSHIP OF CONDECA FOR THE NEXT YEAR. NORMALLY THE CHAIRMANSHIP ROTATES AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS. NEXT IN SEQUENCE WERE COSTA RICA, PANAMA AND GUATEMALA. COSTA RICA PRESENTED A PROBLEM BECAUSE OF ITS LACK OF AN ARMY. THE FIVE COUNTRIES WHICH CONSIDER THEMSELVES CENTRAL AMERICAN WERE UNEASY WITH THE PASSING THE LEADERSHIP TO PANAMA, ONLY marginally A REGIONAL MEMBER. LAST YEAR THE PROBLEM WAS DEFERRED BY EXTENDING THE NICARAGUAN CHAIRMANSHIP FOR A SECOND YEAR. THIS YEAR THE ISSUE WAS ADDRESSED; AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED WHEREBY COSTA RICA AND PANAMA WERE OFFERED, BUT DECLINED THE POSITION; AND THE CHAIRMANSHIP ROTATED TO GUATEMALA. SIMILARY, AGREEMENT WAS RACHED ON SCHEDULING THE TWICE-POSTPONED "AGUILA VI" EXERCISE (REFTEL). THE FACT THAT PANAMANIAN TROOPS APPARENTLY WILL TAKE PART ALONG WITH UNITS FROM ALL THE OTHER CA COUNTRIES EXCEPT COSTA RICA (OBSERVERS ONLY) DISPLAYS AN UNEXPECTED UNITY. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT BETWEEN THE CUP AND THE LIP THERE IS SUBSTANTIAL MARGIN FOR SPILLING - AS APPEARS TO BE HAPPENING IF A RECENT PRESS REPORT IS CORRECT THAT HONDURAS HAS NOW DECIDED TO SEND ONLY OBSERVERS TO THE AGUILA EXERCISE.

3. THE THEME OF THE THREAT OF COMMUNISM WAS KEYNOTED BY PRESIDENT SOMOZA. THE FINAL REPORT OF THE CONDECA MEETING EXPRESSED THE APPREHENSION OF THE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS IN A COMMUNIST THREAT TO STABILITY IN THE AREA. THE RESOLUTION STATED: "THE COUNCIL IS PREPARED TO ACT TO COUNTERACT SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN THE CENTRAL AMERICAN ISTHMUS PROVOKED BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM OR WHATEVER OTHER SUBVERSIVE FORCE WHEN THE MEMBER SGATES SO REQUIRE." ONLY COSTA RICA DEMURRED ON THE BASIS THIS WAS A POLITICAL RATHER THAN MILITARY MATTER.

4. THERE WAS NO APPARENT TENSION BETWEEN THE REPRESENTATIVES OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 MANAGU 04077 301357Z

EL SALVADOR AND HONDURAS AS MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED AS A RESULT OF THE BORDER FLARE-UP.

5. COMMENT: THE SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF THE REUNION AND ITS FOCUS ON COMMUNISM INDICATE EITHER DEFERENCE OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN MILITARY LEADERS TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA OR A SHARED PERCEPTION OF THE DANGER POSED BY REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS SUCH AS NICARAGUA'S FSLN, GUATEMALA'S "RED BERETS" AND EL SALVADOR'S FLP. IT SEEEMS

LIKELY THAT BOTH INFLUENCES WERE AT WORK. THE CENTRIPETAL PULL OF
CENTRAL AMERICANISM REMAINS A SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT FORCE TO
KEEP EVEN A COUNTRY WITH DISSIMILAR POLITICAL-MILITARY PERCEPTIONS,
SUCH AS COSTA RICA, WITHIN ITS ORBIT.
THEBERGE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMBINED MILITARY EXERCISES, MILITARY PLANS, MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: powellba
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MANAGU04077
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760329-0527
From: MANAGUA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760813/aaaaaknm.tel
Line Count: 120
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MANAGUA 3930
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: powellba
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUL 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <26 OCT 2004 by powellba>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONDECA: WRAP UP
TAGS: MARR, ES, GT, HO, CS, PN, NU, XK, OAS, CONDECA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006